New sugar factories in Gujarat

3856. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of proposals are pending with Government for final decision to set up new sugar factories in Gujarat;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for delay in clearance thereof; and

(c) by when these proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. In view of the large pendency of unimplemented letters of intent/licences already issued, proposals for setting up of new sugar factories have not yet been taken up for consideration.

Kick backs to import of wheat

3857. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent import of wheat from Canada, Australia and USA kick-backs were involved; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Rise in prices of foodgrains supplied under Public Distribution System

3858. DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether government propose to increase the prices of wheat, rice and sugar being sold through public distribution system;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government subsidy being provided to the foodgrains is likely to go up;

(d) whether Government have considered that the proposed increase in prices of foodgrains will be within the reach of the families living below the poverty line before implementing the said proposal; and

(e) if so, what are the facts in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) (a) and (b) No decision has been taken by Government to further increase the Central issue price (ex-FCI godown) of wheat and rice and the retail issue price of levy sugar for public distribution system.

(c) The food subsidy burden of the Government increases if the Central issue prices (ex-FCI godown) of foodgrains are not increased to absorb the increase in the procurement cost on account of increases allowed in the minimum support prices/procurement prices of foodgrains.

(d) and (e) The Central issue prices (ex-FCI godown) of foodgrains are deliberately fixed below the economic cost with a view to make the foodgrains available to PDS consumers at reasonable prices who generally belong to the vulnerable sections of the society. A huge subsidy is borne by Government on this account.

Consumption of cereals, pulses and edible oils

3859. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the per capita consumption of Cereals, Pulses and edible oils in the country during the last three years as compared to the World level standard; and

(b) the World level standard for per